

Source

A Newsletter for the Patients, Volunteers & Staff of the VA Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics

VA SORCC Supports CFC Fundraiser

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Dr. Max McIntosh, Director, VA SORCC going for a hole-in-one

Thanks to your generosity, the VA SORCC raised \$24,559.47 for local and national charities. This year although we did not quite make our goal of \$28,000, we did very well considering the current state of the economy.

Thanks to everyone who donated time, money or energy making each event a huge success and lot's of fun! The highlight of this year's campaign events were the CFC carnival and gift basket silent auction, a chili cook-off and a putting contest. The winner,

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The VA SORCC, welcomes submission of articles of interest to our readers. The editor reserves the right to use and edit all contributed articles. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Administrative Boards, Editorial Staff, or Department of Veterans Affairs.

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A Message from the

Dental Department

Dear Fellow Employees, Volunteers, Veterans and Friends of VASORCC:

The Dental Office has had some big changes over the past year. Two of the changes are we have two new Dentists. Dr. John Hall joined us in April 2008 and Dr. Paul Anderson came on board in July 2008. Dr. Hall and his assistant, Bob, are our inpatient team and Dr. Anderson, along with his assistant, Elisha, is helping to shorten our outpatient waiting



times. Dr. Anderson tied for third place in the recent chili cook-off and Dr. Hall, with his theatrical background, lead the Dental teams to a first place win in the Halloween costume contest. Both Dr. Hall and Dr. Anderson are Army veterans and along with our new Chief, Dr. Scott Bomberg, we are four doctors, five assistants: Angela, Linda Ann, Elisha, Bob and Kim. Our lab technician is Cathy.

The other big changes are the new operatory chairs, lights, digital radiography equipment and new computers and monitors in each operatory giving the doctors the ability to instantaneously view panoramic and intraoral x-rays.

With computerized I-MED consent and the elimination of paper charts our dental records are now 100% within the electronic medical records protecting patient information. Who Cares? We Care.

Happy Holidays!

David T. Quinn, DMD,FAES,FAGD

We Salute Our Veterans

Veterans Day Celebration



Above Left: Roy Horne and Dr. Richard Pimentel. Above Right: Frank Wolf, David West, Grandma Aggie, Tom Smith, Ricky Martin, Jim Prevatt, Max McHatton. Above: Chaplain Bell, Roy Horne, Anna Diehl, Dr. Richard Pimentel, Jack Walker, John Howard and C.W. Smith

The VA Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center & Clinics (SORCC) celebrated Veterans Day on November 11 and was honored to have as the guest speaker, Dr. Richard Pimentel, one of the leading experts in the nation on practical issues of the ADA, Workers Compensation, Disability Management, and Disability and Diversity issues in the workplace. The full length motion picture of his life story “Music Within”, released throughout the country in the fall of 2007 was viewed the previous day by staff, patients and volunteers.

A Patriotic Musical Tribute was performed by Rogue Valley Symphonic Band; TAPS was presented by Echo Taps volunteer, Kyle Roe; White City Young Marines assisted in program set up and serving refreshments, and a Memorial Tribute to Oregon’s Fallen OIF/OEF veterans and Colors presented and retired by the 186th Oregon Army National Guard Honor Guard. Also in attendance was George Rader of Medford, Oregon and Dave Perry of Modesto, California, two old Navy buddies, who last saw each other 42 years ago when they were both gunners mates aboard the USS Valley Forge in the Vietnam War. Close to 300 people attended the event, and there was media coverage by Channel 5 and Channel 12 news. Staff, volunteers and the public attended.



Do
YOU
HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT VOTER REGISTRATION?

INPATIENTS AND RESIDENTS...
IF YOU NEED INFORMATION ON HOW YOU CAN EXERCISE
YOUR FREEDOM BY VOTING IN LOCAL AND NATIONAL ELECTIONS,
CONTACT THE VA VOLUNTARY SERVICE OFFICE LISTED BELOW.

BUILDING 202, ROOM 151

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**VOTER INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE IN
HANDOUTS WITH INTERNET REFERENCES
FOR ALL STATES.**

**IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE WE WILL
SCHEDULE YOU TO VISIT WITH A
VOTER ASSISTANCE VOLUNTEER.**



Camp White History

Our fellow club member, and the first president of Camp White Historical Association, Albert Johnson, served at Camp White, Oregon from June 1942 through May 1943. Albert enlisted in the U.S. Army at Fort Logan, Colorado in November 1939. Albert was sent to Fort Bliss Texas, there being attached to General Custer's old 1st Cavalry-when the prime mover of artillery pieces was still the Cavalry horse. During this time, Albert participated in the now famous Louisiana Maneuvers of August and September 1941. In 1942, Albert was sent to the new training camp located six miles north of Medford Oregon-Camp White. Twenty-one year old Staff Sergeant Albert Johnson was assigned as a cadre instructor training new men on the 105MM and 155MM howitzers-Division field artillery, B battery, 346th Field Artillery, 91st Division.

Albert and his men trained hard and participated in the 91-mile march led by General Charlie Gerhardt, and training on the artillery ranges, knowing that they would be using their combat skills in battle soon enough. In November 1943, Albert was transferred to Camp Adair Corvallis, Oregon to train in the newly formed 70th Division. They soon shipped to overseas duty on the USS Mariposa, landing in Southern France. Attached to General Alexander Patch's 7th Army, they

went on line as part of operation Anvil. When Albert entered into combat, the front lines were in the vicinity of Nancy France.

Staff Sergeant Johnson spent the next three months in combat participating in many combat actions including the "Battle of Philipsburg", passing through the Siegfried line, and crossing the combat engineer bridge at Remagen. After fighting their way into Germany, Albert and his men ended up at war's end in Frankfurt. After returning to the United States, Staff Sergeant Albert Johnson was discharged from service at the separation center at Camp Beale California, October 19, 1945. Albert moved to the Rogue Valley from Oakland, California in 1950. He worked for the Jackson County Public Works retiring in 1982. Albert was President and one of the founders the Camp White Historical Association, a volunteer at the VA SORCC in White City, a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars White City Post, and a member of the Southern Oregon Military Vehicle Collector's Club. Al Johnson passed away in office and has been deeply missed.



Albert Johnson 1921-1994

VAVS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December '08	20 th	Patients Christmas Gift Distribution*
	25 th	Merry Christmas!! CRD Office Closed
	31 st	Patients New Year's Eve Celebration, Theater*
January '09	1 st	Happy New Year! CRD office Closed
	19 th	Martin Luther King Jr. Day! CRD Office Closed

NOTE: This is not an all-inclusive list. It is a general guideline to recurring events!

A Taste for Excellence

By Linda Plumlee

Nutrition and Food Service is proud of the sixty-two employees who serve our veterans meals 365 days a year. There is a diverse group working behind the counters, with their ages, ethnic backgrounds, and home lives varying widely. Regardless of their differences, they all have something in common, their commitment to our veterans. Men and women alike come to work in rain or shine, snow or sleet. They have a job to do, and they take it very seriously. Of our kitchen staff, six employees have more than 20 years in service with the Department Veterans Affairs. Annie Davis has the longest service length with 26 years!

7 employees = 15+ years of service
7 employees = 8+ years of service
13 employees = 5+ years of service
14 employees = 2+ years of service
15 employees = 0-1 year of service

Nutrition and Food Service has over 400 years of combined years of service, yea! All of those years of experience explains why they do such a terrific job. However, the reason they all stay at the VA SORCC is their "Taste for Excellence" and YOU, the Veteran. For all you have given, we thank you!

Continued from cover

once again for the basket that brought in the most contribution, \$425 was (pictured below) Nutrition and Food Services Weekend Get-Away Basket. This year's CFC Top Contributor Award goes to Pharmacy Services who donated \$1750. Mad Max and his gang racked up a little over \$8,000 in fines that went toward the CFC total goal

This year's first Annual Chili Cook-Off winners were Ben Nettles, who took home the first place prize of \$50, Roger Hudson, \$30 second place winner , and Shawn Roberts and Dr. Paul Anderson tied for the \$20 third place prize. If you didn't get to try some of the chili, you really missed out because they were all winners. This year \$50 first place Putting Contest winner was Dick Taylor, \$30 second place winner was Rob Robinson, and \$20 third place winner was Dr. McIntosh, whose winnings were donated to CFC. The monetary winning prizes were donated by Silva Auto Repair and VAEA who each donated \$100

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Committee looks forward to another great campaign next year. It's never too early to start thinking of ways to make it better and to get involved.



Combined Federal Campaign Fun!



Stephen "Clay" Perdue having fun during Putting Contest



Teresa Silva (Little Red Riding Hood) and Regina Ford (Peg Bundy) enjoy CFC Carnival



Liz Cravens and Cigdem Hyder enjoy CFC Carnival



Tom Marshall sampling chili during chili contest



Dr. McIntosh looking over the silent auction baskets



Mike O'Malley in CFC jail

Who Cares?

About Quality Health Care.



Billy Haden does. Billy feels a special kinship with vets because he's walked that mile. He's a vet, too. "I take great pride in helping veterans sitting across from me or on the phone line navigate through all the services provided throughout our healthcare system", says Billy. "Its not enough to just do my job. For me, healthcare extends beyond professional competence. I believe it's through our compassion for the veteran and our relationships and communication with our fellow co-workers that we are able to provide true quality healthcare and meet the needs of the veteran."

VA SORCC Employees. Dedicated to Your Care.
Every Day.

Veterans Get Health Care Through SORCC's CCHT Program

EASIER ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE- IMPROVED PATIENT OUTCOMES.

The implementation of the CCHT (Care Coordination Home Telehealth) program has brought a much improved health care delivery system to many veterans who previously found it difficult to get the care that might be more helpful to them. The factors involved were age, distance, geographics (many veterans live in rural areas) and their own health problems which limit their ability to get to the care they need.

The CCHT RN's have many years experience working with Patients in different areas of the health care system. They find it both rewarding and challenging to be part of the CCHT program here at the SORCC (Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics). The telehealth system itself was implemented at our particular facility in 2003-2004. The current nurses began working with Telehealth in 2007.



CCHT Program Team: Barbara Vargas, RN, Russ Knenedy, PSA and Janis Brown, RN

The Telehealth delivers care to veterans who would benefit most from this type of communication health care system. Specifically those with, CHF (Congestive Heart Failure), Diabetes and Hypertension (a large majority of our patients fall into these two categories) and COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease). We have added Veterans who also have Mental Health issues, which covers symptoms dealing with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), Depression and Bipolar disorders. The Telehealth program strives to give the veteran the best care possible with increased communication.

Many of the Veterans involved have multiple health problems that overlap one another. They are able to address their health issues without visiting their PCP (Primary Care Provider) as frequently. This is very helpful to all involved. The record keeping system is state of the art. We follow recommended criteria for each patient's disease or health problem.

For example with the CHF (Congestive Heart Failure) patient we are able to help them manage their blood pressure and maintain a weight that does not fluctuate due to increased fluid retention by monitoring their readings through Viterion. We ask the patient about shortness of breath, chest discomfort, feeling of ABD fullness, swelling of the feet and legs and questions about whatever other symptoms might go along with that particular disease. If anything is out of the ordinary we get in touch with their PCP and / or Theresa Brooks PA-C (Diabetic Provider) who makes any necessary adjustments to the patients care. If there are changes we contact the patient with those changes that were made and it might also be necessary to have the patient seek emergent care.

One case that stands out to us because of the improvement he has made is a middle-aged male, very overweight, non-compliant with both diet and medications. He had stopped taking his Lasix as prescribed. The patient had such uncontrolled Diabetes that it was affecting all parts of his life. His hyperglycemia and complaint of edema, "severe" enough to cause overwhelming fatigue and discomfort in his lower legs caused him to have many problems. He also had Hypertension but felt unable to stand long enough to take his BP readings (he should have been sitting). We instructed him to move his equipment so that he would have room to sit while taking his blood pressure readings. He could hardly ambulate any distance due to his shortness of breath, dizziness and overwhelming fatigue. There was no help available to him. He missed doctor's appointments because he felt too ill to drive himself (it was not safe due to the possibility of having an accident). This Veteran had already been taken to the emergency room once when he himself called 911 because he fainted. This Veteran does live

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Construction Activities – 2009

The FMS Project Section has been very busy for FY09.

Projects recently completed:

- Upgrade Building 201 Elevator (along with some work on Building 208)
- Storm Water Management

Projects Recently Started:

- B200 Replace Branch Circuits – just started
- B220 Replace Exterior Stairwells – 75% done
- Renovate B209, Phase 2



Connecting Corridor 201

- Renovate Connecting Corridor 202 and Install Elevator (Design/Build) – will take about 7 months
- Replace Flooring – various buildings
- Boiler Plant Structural (Design/build) – seismic upgrade – 30%
- Replace Underground Storage Tanks, Boiler Plant – replace tanks with above ground ones – protested
- Sleep Lab, B213LS – started

- Large Meeting Room, B222S – temporarily on hold
- Replace Bed B217



Deconstruction of B217

- Replace Bed B218 – anticipated start in November
- B224 HVAC Installation
- Designs – Main Roadways, 2nd Waterline Connect Activity Room and Restroom Renovation, BP Ener Replace Bed B221, and B 250 FCA Deficiency Re
- Crawl Space Access, Building 201– will start soon

Integration work status:

- Expect moves into B211LN to occur November 21
- Expect all MH Providers moved/integrated by January 2009
- Building 212LN work anticipated to start January 2009
- Work on B211LN – 100% completed

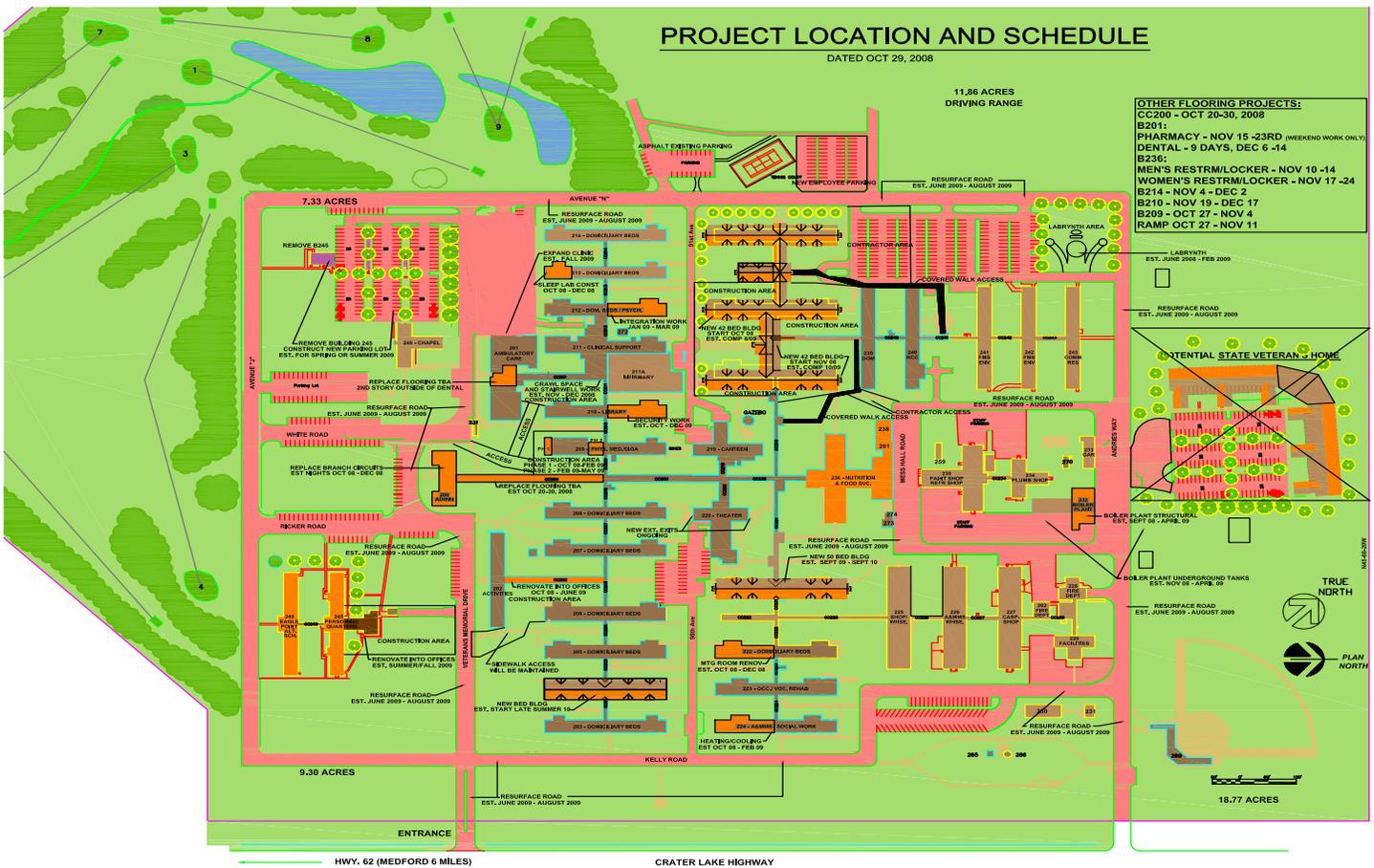
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- Infirmary work has been completed and so there are four exam rooms designated as outpatient/inpatient exam rooms.
- B222S work completed. Moved SATP to B222S and Fee Basis to B212LN.
- Completed two new offices in Building 211LS.
- Redesign Team established to determine how best to arrange building 211LN

Planned projects still that have not been mentioned above (may not include 100% of the projects planned):

- **EXPAND AMBULATORY CARE CLINIC** – minor construction Design/Build project has been funded.
- Replace Bed Bldg 221 – construction will be obligated this FY
- Replace Bed Bldg 204 – design will be obligated this FY
- Resurface Main Roadways – planned construction this FY to obligate and do work
- Replace HVAC B222S – planned construction this FY to obligate
- Renovate B212LS (old SPD) – planned construction this FY to obligate
- Renovate Theater Restrooms, B220 – Design/build FY09 obligate
- Re-roof B225 – construction this year
- Re-roof Connecting Corridors – construction this year



Above: Now and Future Construction Plans (Large Posters on Display at Construction Sites.



EMPLOYEE NEWS

From Human Resources

WELCOME ABOARD:

Canteen: Charles Ware, Cashier Clerk

Mental Health Service: Dr. Evan Alvord, Social Work/Clinical Psychologist; Brenda Davis, LSW Suicide Prevention Coordinator

Police & Security Service: Casey Guches, Security Assistant

VISN 20 CIO: Susan Ondera, IT Specialist

MOVING AROUND:

Mental Health Service: Scott Sarver, Promotion-Administrative Officer

Police & Security Service: Kloudi Downing, Security Assistant

Residential Care Program: Mike Kilbane, Promotion – Social Service Assistant

SOARS: Julia Delahoussay, transfer to Reno

VISN IT: Wilma Gonce, transfer to IT Austin, Kathleen Rafish, transfer OI&T Business Office – Cleveland

RETIREEES: Joe Cash, Carpenter-FMS

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alone.

When the patient entered our program we started watching his blood sugars, blood pressures and weights. We gave him education on his disease processes and sent him literature on the proper diabetic diet. He was able to finally get to his PCP who got him back on schedule with his medications. We asked the PCP for HHA (Home Health Aide) assistance so he granted the order after examining the patient.

The HHA has been a tremendous help to the patient and they have developed a good rapport. She helps with grocery shopping, cooking and has encouraged him to lose 20 lbs. He is feeling much better now and is ambulating outdoors for short distances and has enrolled in the Smoking Cessation Program.

There are many veterans who are now taking advantage of the Telehealth program and have similar stories to tell. One of positive outcomes is that we are able to help veterans stay in their own home. So many of them are grateful for the CCHT program and have let us know with phone calls and letters of appreciation. Some veterans that live alone tell us they like the interaction on the phone because it gives them someone to talk to.

We have approximately 175 (plus others waiting to go on the program) veterans in our program at this time; 84 of those veterans are NIC (NON-Institutional Care). It's a win-win for everyone involved. We have surpassed the goal for the September Fiscal Year 2008 measure and have already reached the goal for 2009 which will be effective in October 2008.



STRESS MANAGEMENT IDEAS

Understand the causes of your stress. Not all stress is bad.

Good stress is when something that should be wonderful happens to you but you get stressed as a result -- because anything that really is a good thing can still cause stress. For example:

- a job promotion
- a new baby
- you buy a beach house
- you get a new car

Bad things are more obvious:

- a medical illness
- the loss of a job
- a loved one passing away
- the loss of a house
- even the loss of your hair



Reduce all unnecessary stressors

Is this stress your stress? Do you have control or power over it? Unnecessary stressors are certain foods, drugs, people, certain environments, caffeine, tobacco, sugar, and fats. Set healthy boundaries in your life preventing unnecessary stressors from affecting you in the future; have a plan of action.

Involve yourself in some type of exercise approved by your doctor

Relax or work the muscles. This produces natural stress reducing chemicals in your body. Working out, walking, running or jogging, martial arts, hobbies. Even just going outside and sitting on the bench can get you moving.

Meditate Regularly

In a relaxed posture silently say a phrase or verse of scripture that brings you peace or happiness. Such as the serenity prayer, positive self talk, telling yourself you are going to have a good day. You can even write down something positive and uplifting and repeat it to yourself throughout the day. This is a great way to start the morning off. Read it again at lunch time, and in the evening before bed. You can meditate anywhere; in the car, bathroom, bedroom, at work, elevator, walking or jogging, or sitting folding laundry.

Improve Nutrition

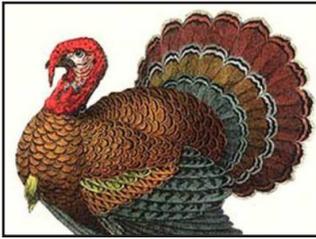
Some foods contain substances like caffeine which raises your blood pressure and increases nervousness. Cut down on fried food; eat more fruits and vegetables, cut down on caffeine and nicotine. Grab a piece of fruit instead of pie.

Laugh and Play More

Deep, hearty laughter and play provides much needed oxygen and diversion. Make yourself laugh, tell a funny joke, go bowling with friends, and go to movies with friends. Get a joke book or look at the cartoons in the paper.

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Thanksgiving Cheer



Associate Director Roy Horne, spread a little cheer around by lighting up the cafeteria tray line on Thanksgiving Day as he served up baked ham, roast turkey and candied sweet potatoes to the veterans. Thanks, Roy !



Partnering to Better Serve Veterans



The VA SORCC was honored as a recipient of the Department of Veterans Affairs Robert W. Carey Quality Award Performance Achievement Winner.

The symposium and ceremony were held October 29-31, 2008, in Washington D.C. The SORCC presented a poster at the symposium, highlighting the residential rehabilitation cornerstone and case management programs.

Veterans + SORCC = Profiles of Success

Increase Self-Affirmation

Be nice to yourself. Be around people who are nice to you. Avoid negative people, places, and things. Look in the mirror and say “I like myself”, “I’m a good person”, “I have value, and I am worthy”. Try doing this at least twice a day.

Practice Relaxation Techniques at Bed.

Lie down on your bed and do some mindful meditation, breathing deeply from the abdomen and deeply relaxing all muscles from head to toe. When you go to sleep, find a relaxing position using extra pillows if needed. Make sure the television is off and there are no other distractions. Use earplugs if external noises still persist. Don’t drink a lot of liquids before bed to decrease waking during the night. If you wake do not watch TV, try reading or listening to music. Even a nice hot bath and a hot cup of decaf tea can do the trick for some insomnia.

Behind the Lines

By Patient Council

This month in Behind the Lines, the Patient Council would like to recognize John “Critter Guy” Schlitter, for his outstanding work in Pest Control, at the VA SORCC.

John manages to keep a low profile despite his wide-ranging runs in the “Bat Mobile” to answer the needs of fellow veterans and staff with pest problems. One of the most famous pest controls is the bats in the hallway.

John served in the U.S Navy from 1964 – 1970 and before assuming his super-hero identity of Batman in September 2001 John was employed with the Eagle Point Cemetery.

Many times John has gone above and beyond his job description with donating his own time keeping an eye on the SORCC’s felines and taking care of the KOI pond.

The Patient Council here would like to thank John “Critter Guy” Schlitter for the superb service he provides them.

Wolfgang Agotta, Patient Advocate

Can help you with: Compliments, complaints or unmet needs. If you have SORCC policies and procedures questions not answered elsewhere, come see me I have an open door policy. My hours are:

6:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Monday—Thursday
Building 201, Room 272
Ext. 3657

